providing a forum for the boston area gay community

gay community news

volume 1, number 2
june 28, 1973

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H E L L O A G A I N

With the publication of the second issue, we are attempting to broaden our emphasis in the first issue on listing events and now include factual reporting on news of interest to the gay community. We shall seek to encourage lively and stimulating communication on event oriented news. We invite you to send us your comments and opinions, as well as your reactions to what you read here or elsewhere. This is your newsletter. USE IT!

Our limited staff and experience necessitates somewhat limited coverage, with many undoubtably important events omited. We shall attempt to remedy this as soon as possible. This week heightens this problem, with the proliferation of news due to Gay Pride Week, and the devotion of much of this issue to these important events. We have been encouraged by the warn response of the community. Thanks to all who contributed time and energy.

G A Y B A R F I R E K I L L S 2 9

On Sunday evening, June 24th, 29 of our gay brothers and sisters were killed when a flash fire swept through "The Upstairs", a New Orleans gay bar. This bar was particularly popular on Sunday evenings, when a food and beer "special" was offered. Fire Chief McCrossen has refused to comment on the cause of the fire, although it has been (cont. page 2)

D O N ' T M I S S I T !

If you haven't got a T.V.-find one! The first Boston gay oriented T.V. program will be on the air Sat. June 30th, Ch. 2, at 3:30pm. Tune in for a together rap on the gay situation and what's being done about it in the Boston commnnity. Produced by Loretta Lotman for Gay Media Watch, the panel includes; James M. Zepp and Lynne Larkin (cast members of Coming Out), Nick Deutsch (Director of Coming Out), Elaine Noble(co-moderator of the Gay Way radio program), H. Andrew Graham(assistant medical director of the Homophile Community Health Service), Martha Akey(H.C.H.S.) and Laura McMurray(D.O.B.).

Discussion will center around issues concerning gay life for the individual- its psychological, legal, and (cont. page 2)

FIRE (cont.) alleged that the flash fire was started by an angered patron. In addition to the 29 deaths, several persons are in serious condition with burns and other injuries.

Amoung those killed in the blaze were the current pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church of New Orleans, and several members and friends of the MCC there. Rev. Troy Perry, founder of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, has flown to New Orleans to assist the survivors and the families of those killed.

Memorial Services are being held by the Gay community throughout the country, and Rev. Perry has named Sunday, July 1st as a national day of mourning. In Boston, a Memorial Service will be held by MCC on Saturday evening, June 30th, 7:00pm, at Old West Church.

DON'T MISS IT! (cont.) social aspects. The program is geared to be particularly helpful to those who feel that they are alone in their "gayness" and would like to know who to contact. Appeals will be made by the panel for gay people in Boston to join in the effort to change our society's present standards regarding homosexuality. After the showing, please write the station supporting gay media time- with enough support this can become a regular feature. More on this next week.

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C O N F R O N T A T I O N A T W N A C

On Wed., 24th June, during Gay Pride Week, the weekly WNAC-TV (chan. 7) program MASSREACTION was given a sudden and unexpected taste of gay pride. The program, intended as a means in which "the public" can "communicate" with the station through its commentators, was attended by four members of the Gay Media Watch. Breaking into a facinating philosophical discussion on boxing, Charlie Shively (also of Fag Rag) asked why men couldn't learn to love instead of hurt one another. After a long pause while their minds tried to recover, John Williams (also of Good Gay Poets) asked why channel 7 had devoted so little coverage to gay events, specifically Gay Pride Week. Again, Silence, nervous snickers, terror. Without allowing them to escape, Elaine Noble (also of Gay Way Radio) asked why the audience had snickered, and why none of the announcers had answered any of Charlie or John's questions. Were they afraid of us?

At this point, George Frazier, one of the commentators, finally responded that he was all for gay people and had never ignored us, but that he didn't want us to "scare the horses" by protesting too loudly or make ourselves too public.

Although there were no dramatic, immediate results, consciousness was raised a few feet, and they are quickly learning that we are a force to be reckoned with.

MASSREACTION is broadcast live every Wed. at 7:30pm. Anyone can get tickets to the show by writing to: WNAC-TV, RKO bldg., Govt. Center, Boston. Future organized confrountations are planned. Contact Gay Media Watch, or watch GCN for further information.

"SCARE THE HORSES" huh?********** AND HE ACTUALLY SAID IT ON TV!

WANNA DANCE?

The Gay Community Center Committee sponsored three dances during Gay Pride Week, all held at the Charles Street Meetinghouse. The first, Saturday night the 16th, was the most successful, with the all-women's band "Whitch" drawing a sell-out crowd of 500, including many gay women who are noticeably absent at the regular Friday night dances.

Although the temperature in the hall at times neared ninety degrees, few seemed to mind greatly, and non-stop dancing to the great music was the standard for the night. The atmosphere became electric with so many people really enjoying themselves, leading the "Whitch" to remark that it was the best Gay Dance that they had ever performed at. (There is a tentative return engagement planned for a Friday and Saturday in September -- watch for details.)

The dance Friday the 22nd with the "Deadly Nightshade" drew 200 people. Although their music, of the foot-stomping country variety, complete with a fantastic fiddle and even a wash-board, was fascinating to watch and listen to, dancing was considerably harder, and the explosion of the crowd's energy never quite took place. (In all fairness, some people really got into the music that night, but not the majority. This group has electrified the whole crowd elsewhere, but Boston is just not used to them and this music.)

At the last danceon Saturday the 23rd, the "Whitch" could not quite repeat their previous performance, nor could the possibly danced-out crowd, which numbered only 300 in comparison to the 500 of a week earlier.

FEETS, GET MARCHIN"!!

Boston's Gay Pride Week pranced smiling into the streets of the city Saturday morning, with the biggest Gay Pride parade Boston has ever seen. 300-500 gay sisters and brothers paraded from Copley Square (near Ken's) through the Block, the Common, and the Hill, past city and state power palaces, to proclaim their liberation.

Support flowed from numerous gay sidewalk paraders, bystanders, and the few straight-identified participants in the parade. Policepeople, unable to come out publicly because of their oppression as civil servants, nonetheless flashed their lights and made way for the gay throng. A group of women's-right-to-abortion picketers at the State House smiled with their gay sisters and brothers and raised their hands in mutual greeting, and shared chants.

As gay Pride Week began, the air vibrated with wishes of Happy Birthday to Christopher Street, and many happy returns of gay peace, love, and pride.

ENCORE!!

The Gay Pride Week festivities at the Charles Street Meetinghouse were heightened by the one-night performance of the play "Coming Out", written by Jonathan Katz, originally produced at GAA's Firehouse in June of 1972, and produced and directed in Boston by Nicky Deutsch.

A collage of beautifully-performed sketches (based on poetry, fiction, autobiographical and historical accounts) traced the history of homosexuality,

and created an intense emotional experience for the audience, ranging from tears to anger to joy. In short, it was complete "mind-fucker". The talented cast included Harry Browne, Ken Dixon, Stephanie Johnson, Lynne Larkin, Loretta Lotman, Allison Mitchell, Christifa Sandborn, Michael Simmons, Joanna Ward, and Jim Zepp. They truly deserved the immense applause the standing-room-only crowd awarded them at the play's end. Don't pass up a chance to see "Coming Out." Your mind, spirit and body will be well rewarded. (See notice for P-town performance elsewhere in this issue.

MALE PAS-DE-DEUX highlights variety program

Thursday night's presentation of dance and music at the Meetinghouse was an artistic highlight of Gay Pride Week. All performances were volunteered by Boston artists.

The program began with a solo movement performance based on the theme of the four major elements, earth, air, fire and water. The dancer flowed through the increasingly complex interpretation of life. The artist was inventive in his use of lighting and props, particularly a large tie-dyed sheet that was used as a backdrop, shadow screen and finally as part of his costume.

Folksongs based on the themes of friendship and childhood experiences followed, performed a local singing team. The singers harmonized gracefully throughout the numbers, but were unfortunately handicapped by lack of a sound system.

The highlight of the evening came in a beautifully-choreographed and -performed pas-de-deux by two men. The dancers gave a wonderfully controlled performance in the love ballet, perhaps the first ever performed by male dancers. The piece, accompanied by piano, received a standing ovation from the enthusiastic crowd.

The evening was co-hosted by Loretta Lotman and James M. Zepp, cast members of "Coming Out" and members of Gay Media Watch.

OUR BIG-CITY COUSINS

On June 24th an estimated 17,000 beautiful gay people took part in fourth annual Gay Pride March in New York City. Following the four-mile march from Central Park to Christopher Street, a rally was held in Washington Square, featuring speeches by Morris Kight and Barbara Gittings, and entertainment by Bette Midler and others.

Amid the air of celebration tension was felt when a transvestite attempted to speak. He was thrown off the stage the first time, and finally permitted to have the microphone only after the audience demanded to hear him. He complained of oppression of transvestites within the gay movement. Generating more conflict, a member of Lesbian Feminist Liberation condemned transvestites for their parodying of women. Later another angry transvestite from S.T.A.R. reminded us that drag queens first fought back at the Stonewall in 1969, and gave all of us our Gay Pride.

Miraculously, and somewhat ironically, the rally continued with its determined theme of gay unity. Seemingly, if gay unity is to exist it will have to be with an understanding of our essential differences as well as our common interests. Any attempt to formulate a single conception of gay

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interests. Any attempt to formulate a single conception of gay identity is simplistic and self-righteous. This would have appeared to have been the genui genuine theme of this year's gay pride celebration.

WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?

Amid the unity and gaiety of the Gay Pride festivities, there lies the dark cloud of confusion, mis-management, and basic poor organization. These two events are among the examples.

The organizers of the "Gay Cruise" were informed that "not enough tickets were sold" for the use of the large boat. Fine; so all the happy ticket holders piled onto the smaller boat, and so did a great many non-ticket holders. The immense crowd forced everyone to switch over from the smaller boat onto the larger one. Fortunately, this was the last move, and the cruise finally got underway. The exercise was great, but the hassle was a pain in the life preserver. Bon voyage!

Our second story opens up at the Charles Street Meetinghouse, with about thirty people waiting to hop on the second bus for the NYC march. The trouble was that there was no bus for them to hpp on. The reason? No one knows, or if they do, they're not talking. The result? A lot of confused and angry gay sister and brothers thumbing their way to Fun City. Happy trails!

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NOTES

TUNE IN

This Thursday, June 28, Gay Way on WBUR-FM at (9:00pm will have a discussion with members of the Ad Hoc Committee for a Gay Community Center. Also, there will be reports on the tragic fire in a New Orleans gay bar last weekend.
Donation
Next Thursday, July 5, Gay Way will present an interview with Alex Kelly, an upfront gay musician who will be performing his own songs.

LAVENDER HOUR on WBCN-FM July 1st (sunday) at 10:00pm will broadcast portions of the Gay Pride Week Gala held in New York's Washington Square. Included on the program will be such personalities as Bette Midler, Sally Eaton, Nateline Davis, and others.

COME OUT IN P-TOWN

The Boston production of Jonnathan Katz" documentary play of gay life and liberation in the USA will give two performances in Provincetown.

Saturday, June 30, 8pm
Sunday, July 1, 2pm

Performances will be held at the Provincetown Inn, 1 Commercial Av. Donation $2.00 at the door. Last chance to see the show until fall. (See review above.)

MEMORIAL SERVICE

There will be a memorial service at 7pm Saturday, June 30th, at the Old West Church, 131 Cambridge St., Boston, for those people killed and injured in the New Orleans fire. All gay people are urged to attend. (See above for more news on the fire.)

CRUISING ON BOSTON HARBOR

For many of those involved, Sunday's cruise on the Boston Harbor was disorganized and somewhat disappointing. The evening began with many eager ticket holders boarding the smaller of two boats available, as dictated by advance ticket sales. With the arrival of an equal number of non ticket holders, the entire entourage was forced to transfer to the Provincetown, the larger vessel, which was luckily still available. Off to a late shove-off, our happy sea-going gays were able to pacify their frustrations of the early evening at the ship's bar, the most heavily occupied area aboard. With fresh air, good friend, and a stiff drink in hand, our harbor cruise shall go down in Boston Gay history as a reasonable..... success?

D.O.B. OPEN HOUSE

On Tuesday evening, June 26, there was an open house of the Daughters of Bilitis. It was DOBs first rap session at their new offices in room 415, 419 Boylston St. In the last year their membership has grown from 40 to 100 women and prompted them to find larger offices.

The weekly raps begin with a "rap leader" collecting questions that the members would like the groups feedback on. This eliminates any "lack of communication" which some members may experience.

The sizable crowd was quite impressive, with some people seat- in the outer office. Despite the amount of people, we were able to initiate a conversation dealing with many aspects of gay life, and create a pleasant and informative evening for all.

"HAVE YOU HEARD THE WORD OF THE LORD TODAY?"

Our usual hum-drum afternoons at the Charles Street Meeting House had a one day spiritual uplift last Sunday (June 17) with a foot-stomping, hallelujah shouting Religious Workshop and Service as part of Gay Pride Week '73.

The workshop, moderated by Rick Hamilton, was attended by several local clergymen, ex-seminarians, as well as a hell of a lot of interested members of the community. Invited, but unable to attend, were members of the process, Scientology, and the Ranakrishna Vedanya Society. Also unable to honor us with his presence was a Cardinal Medeiros, a leader of a small but growing religious sect in the Boston area.

The workshop was followed by a heart-warming service under the supervision of Larry Bernier(MCC) Randy Gibson(CSMH*UNIV.) Paul (Dignity-Boston), and also The Eyes of God. The service was an experience that none of the participants will soon forget, with a sharing of thoughts and feelings, and a reading of the "Creed for Gay People" by its creator, Paul Shanely. God Bless!

GAY ART SHOW

Despite handicaps with help, time, and communication, CSMH played host to several artists from the Boston and New England area for an art showing, as part of our Gay Pride Week festivities.

Subject matter included; oils, sketches, silk screens, nude studies, and some fine sculpture.

This will, hopefully, encourage many Gay artists in the community to display their works and bring artistic expression and communication to all.

R E A C T ! ! !

Reprinted from The Boston Ledger, Friday, June 22, 1973
Editorial: Gay Pride Week -- more than a parade

This week was Gay Pride Week: a week featuring social events, workshops for the gay community and a parade.

But most people in the staight community will remember a bunch of men dressed up as cheap looking women with lots of lipstick and padding, walking down Commonwealth Avenue in tight dresses and blowing kisses to the gaping crowd.

It's too bad, because Gay Pride Week was an important event in Boston's gay community -- too important to be dismissed as a transvestite parade.

Workshops held at the Charles Street Meetinghouse brought many gay men and women together, giving them a chance to discuss mutual problems openly and frankly. For some it was the first chance to meet other homosexuals in a forum other than a street corner or gay bar and to communicate on an emotional and intellectual, rather than sexual, level.

The parade was no more than an attention-getting device to kick off the week and to draw attention to the gay community.

But it was a poorly chosen tactic, because it merely underlined the image that many people have of a homosexual as a one-dimensional drag queen.

The Boston press gave the parade wide coverage, but ignored the other more important events of the week, as was to be expected. In the press releases sent out to announce Gay Pride Week, no mention was made of the times and places of the other events.

If more thought had been given to the "public relations" of Gay Pride Week, a larger impact could have been made on the straight community. A parade of transvestites just didn't win for the Boston homosexual community the respect it deserves.

GCN Editor's note: This was the entire coverage of the Ledger on the parade, along with a picture of Sylvia. This is offensive to us on many levels, including 1) Faulty reporting; for those who did not see the parade, paragraph two gives the distinct impression that a thousand people in drag paraded. 2) No allowance is given to the fact that the actual three to six drags (depending on your definition of drag) represent only themselves, as do the other 1000. 3) Their inability to accept drags as a viable part of our diversified community.

REACTION IS NEEDED! Call the Ledger at 232-7000 AND write your opinions to The Ledger, 481 Harvard St., Brookline 02146.

* * * * * * * * * *

The Boston Globe is under pressure by right-wingers to suspend their series of article on gays in the Sunday Globe Magazine. Support is needed to continue this excellent series. Send letters of support to: Thomas Winship, Editor, The Boston Globe, Morrissey Blvd., Boston.

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Did you see the Ann Landers column in the Globe Tuesday, June 26? She deals with a gay suicide in her normal unenlightened-in-the-least attitude. Last

time she did this she received more protest mail than ever before in her career as an omnipotent psych-mother. Let's give it to her again. Ann Landers, P.O. Box 3346, Chicago, IL 60654.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"SYLVIA SIDNEY (QUEEN OF THE PARADE)"

Who coronated Sylvia "Queen of the Parade?" Myself and others on the Gay Pride Committee were surprised to find Sylvia speaking to the press and public as spokesperson (if not monarch) of the march; we still want to know by whom and how she was chosen.

Whoever was responsible for the decision was not a transvestite or transsexual since the latter had little place in this year's celebration. The hope was evidently to use Sylvia's popularity and extravagance to attract attention to the parade. In New York City the Lesbian Feminist Liberation statement supported "the right of every person to dress in the way that she or he wishes" but they opposed "the exploitation of women by men for entertainment or profit. ... What we object to today is another instance in which men laughing with one another, at what they present as women, are telling us who THEY think WE are."

Charles Shively

It's difficult for me to compare the events of Gay Pride Week to previous or similar occasions.

The atmosphere of the workshops, dances, parade and play seemed to be one that almost shouted out the gay community's happiness of having found a place in this straight world.

My experiences throughout the week made me realize the need to shed the burden of my secret and come out!

Ellen B. Davis

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Boston Gay Youth.....536-6197
Charles Street Meetinghouse
.....742-0450
Daughters of Bilitis..262-1592
Dignity Boston;c/o 1105 Boylston
Boston, Ma. 02215
Fag Rag.....536-9826
Gay Community Center..491-5669
or..288-8765
Gay Media Watch.....868-5729
or..277-0087
Gay Phone.....354-1555
or..354-1556
Gay Speakers Bureau...547-1451
Gay-Way Radio(WBCR-FM)
call Elaine Noble at 353-2790
Good Gay Poets.....536-9826
Homophile Community Health Service
266-5477
Homophile Union of Boston
536-6197
Lavender Hour(WBCN-FM)
call Littlejohn or Andy Kopkind
at 261-8526
Lesbian Liberation....354-8807
(c/o the Women's Center)
Metropolitan Community Church
of Boston.....266-7491
Project Place.....267-9150
Red River Dyke Collective;c/o 43
Willow St., Somerville, Ma. 02143
Fr. Paul Shanley.....267-0764

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PEOPLE NEEDED:

Poetry & Poetry Reading-- if you are interested or know anyone who is, call Charles Shively...
536-9826

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CLEAN UP SQUAD- for Fri. nite dances at CSMH; people who can stay late(after 1am) contact Rick Hamilton, 491-5669

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Coffeehouse(waiters, cooks, etc) see Steffi or call 742-0450

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Speakers needed by the Speakers Bureau for two upcoming events. Call Geri Bidwell; 547-1451

P-N cont.;

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URGENT!; Publishing help for the summer issue of Boston Gay Line. If you can help with layouts, proof-reading, etc. or have articles to contribute, call HUB-PRONTO!

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Salespeople for Fag Rag; lots of 25 OR MORE! 20¢ per paper, sell at 50¢.(Stores at 30¢ whsle.) call; Charlie Shively at 536-9826.

NOTICES

SEX!; Now that we have your attention, we dire need of all office supplies(file folders);whatever you can donate, we'll probably take.

also

Gay Community News needs staff members to collect info., report, type(obviously), layout, print, etc. call Ian at 742-0450

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Astrology classes will be offered for Gay men. Call Harry Phillips at 661-9362

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Can you donate a vacuum cleaner for the CSMH? If so, call 742-0450

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DIG THIS!; The CSMH Coffeehouse is open 7 days from noon to midnight.

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LAVENDER HOUR is in need of recorded or unrecorded material; music, poetry, brief dramatizations or info on where to find such material(Boston or elsewhere) contact; Andy Kopkind, John Scagliotti, WBCN 261-8526(leave message)

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BARGAIN BASEMENT!; 1970 FIAT 850 SPYDER Conv. AM/FM radio, new starter and clutch. Only 28,000 mi. slight body damage. $900(cheap) Call 267-7196

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GAY WAY RADIO needs trainees on a volunteer basis to run all aspects of show work including research, moderators, all technical aspects, production mat., ideas, etc. Call Elaine 353-2790

THURS 28	9:00pm Fag Rag Staff Meeting CSMH 9:00pm*Gay Way Radio WBUR(90.9FM) Nite:Place gay crisis line 267-9150	THURS 5	9:00pm*Gay Way Radio WBUR (90.9 FM) Nite: Place gay crisis line 267-9150
FRI 29	7:30pm Gay Community News CSMH Staff Meeting 9:00pm GCS Gay Dance CSMH donation $1.50	FRI 6	7:30pm Gay Community News Staff Meeting CSMH 9:00pm GCC Gay Dance CSMH donation $1.50
SAT 30	3:30pm*Catch 44 (Chan. 44) 7:00pm*Memorial Service MCC Old West Church, 131 Camb. St. 8:00pm Good Gay Poets, Coffeehouse CSMH reading by David Eberly 8:00pm*play "Coming Out" P-Town	SAT 7	8:00pm Good Gay Poets Coffeehouse CSMH reading by Ed Cotes
SUN 1	7:00pm Media Watch Mtg. CSMH 1:00pm DOB softball,Mag.Beach Camb. 5:30pm Interfaith Mass,Beacon/Mass. 6:00pm MCC Meeting, Old West 7:00pm MCC Service, Old West 8:00pm*play "Coming Out" P-Town 10:00pm*Lavender Hour WBCN(104.1FM)	SUN 8	1:00pm DOB softball 5:30pm Interfaith Mass 6:00pm MCC Meeting 7:00pm MCC Service 7:00pm Media Watch CSMH
MON 2		MON 9	
TUES 3	7:30pm DOB open rap session and meeting, 419 Boyl.St.Room 323 8:00pm Gay Rollerskating at the Ballarou in Medford	TUES 10	7:30pm DOB open rap session & Mtg. 419 Boyl.R. 323 8:00pm Gay Rollerskating Ballarou Medford
WEDS 4	**********NOTE********** *indicates that more info. on this event is in the newsletter CSMH=Charles St. Meeting House	WEDS 11	